

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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December 31, 1996

Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch Information Letter No.: I-96-38

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons

THE STATE-ONLY FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

Ref.: E-Mail No. 96168, Dated November 20, 1996

The purpose of the Information Notice is to notify counties of the implementation of a new State-Only Family Planning (SOFP) program. The new program is part of the Administration's efforts to increase access to family planning services for low-income California residents. Services are to include contraception, male and female sterilization, limited infertility services, education and counseling, Sexually Transmitted Disease screening, and pregnancy testing.

Eligibility for the program is based on self-declared family size and income. To be eligible, an applicant's gross family income must be at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Participating providers will offer the program to eligible persons requesting family planning services including persons who are Medi-Cal eligible with a unmet share of cost (SOC) or who do not have other health coverage which covers family planning.

If a person is found eligible for SOFP, the medical provider must enroll the person in the SOFP program by either activating their Benefits Identification Card (BIC) or issuing and activating a new Health Access Programs (HAP) card. If the person has a valid BIC, the provider will activate the BIC (for SOFP services only) if one of the following conditions also exist:

1. The person has an unmet SOC on the date of enrollment;
2. The person has limited-scope Medi-Cal that does not include family planning services; or
3. The person is no longer receiving Medi-Cal.

If the person does not have a valid BIC, the provider will issue and activate a HAP card. The HAP card is similar to the BIC, but different in color (teal with black print) and with less information printed on the face. The cards will be prenumbered with a nine-digit number, beginning with a nine and ending in a Y, with a check digit. Providers will be responsible for issuing replacement cards whenever the client reports theirs to be lost, stolen, or nonfunctional.

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Providers will activate client eligibility via one of three methods: a Point-of-Service device (POS/T7), the Automated Eligibility Verification System, or the Internet. SOFP eligibles will be assigned Aid Code 8H for purposes of claims reimbursement through the Medi-Cal fiscal intermediary, Electronic Data Systems (EDS). This aid code will reside on the HAP database rather than on the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS). When a claim is submitted by a provider under Aid Code 8H, EDS will search MEDS for any Medi-Cal eligibility which includes family planning and pay the claim under Medi-Cal before it pays under the HAP system.

Any Medi-Cal provider who agrees to provide the SOFP benefits consistent with the SOFP standards will be eligible to participate after submitting an Application and Agreement to the Department of Health Services' Provider Enrollment Section and attending a mandatory orientation session. Laboratory and pharmacy providers will not be required to enroll in the program. However, they will be able to provide, and be reimbursed for, services to SOFP clients with valid HAP or BIC cards, effective January 6, 1997.

A provider bulletin announcing the SOFP program and soliciting applications was sent out October 15, 1996. The program will be implemented through a geographic roll-out, with Sacramento, Yolo, and San Diego Counties starting up on January 6, 1997. All other counties except Los Angeles will begin March 1, 1997; Los Angeles will start on April 28, 1997.

If you have any questions about the new SOFP program, please call the Health Access Programs Hotline at 1-800-257-6900.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch